



PLYMOUTH CONGREGATIONAL
UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST

FROM PASTOR BLAIR'S DESK

DECEMBER 2025

*But you are a chosen people,
a royal priesthood, a holy nation,
God's own people,
in order that you may proclaim the excellence of him
who called you out of darkness into his marvelous light.
(I Peter 2:9, NRSV)*

As we come to the end of the calendar year, it is good to remember that the end of the year marks the beginning of the church year. The church year begins with the season of Advent when we speak of the incarnation of God through Christ. This story of Christmas is not just about a baby born in a foreign land. It is not just about a young couple struggling to follow the promises of God and, more than a little, feeling overwhelmed in the process. It is a story that is meant to go beyond the birth and speak a message that is timeless and powerful.

At its core, the Christmas story is a story of hope and agency. It is a message of hope that says that whatever befalls us does not have the power to define or diminish us. Those events that threaten us, sadden us, break us, hurt us have a certain power, yes. Nevertheless, we can have hope in the face of such power because we can remember that we are not alone. More than that, we are gifts of grace. We are children of God placed on this earth to offer something unique. We are chosen, holy, and powerful in our own right.

This is the agency that is ours through the incarnation. Through Christ, we are given a holy calling and a divine purpose. We are not accidents nor are we insignificant. We are children of God and we have value that God sees in us and that God calls us to see not just in ourselves but in one another. Yes, the world may seem to be beyond our power to effect change. Nevertheless, because we have been given a new identity in Christ, we can be the change that we wish to see. God gives us that hope and that agency.

May the seasons of Advent and Christmas have power for all of us and instill within us a sense of hope and promise.

Yours in Christ,

Pastor Blair

IN THIS ISSUE...

PASTOR'S MESSAGE.....	1
FOLLOW THE LECTIONARY.....	2
PRAYER & VISITATION REQUESTS.....	2
THANK YOU	2
MEMORIAL.....	2
MODERATOR MESSAGE.....	3
WOMEN'S FELLOWSHIP REPORT.....	3
NUT'S.....	3
BIRTHDAYS & ANNIVERSARIES.....	4
2026 VISIONING TEAM MEMBERS.....	4
2026 PASTORAL RELATIONS MEMBERS.....	4
OCT. VISIONING TEAM MINUTES.....	5
THIS MONTH AT PLYMOUTH.....	6
DECEMBER CALENDAR.....	7
CHURCH AND FAMILY LIFE	8
A LOOK INTO JANUARY 2026.....	9
2025 ANNUAL FINAL MEETING	10
POINSETTIA SALE.....	10
CANDLELIGHT CHRISTMAS EVE SER.....	10
GOOD-BYE FRIEND.....	11



FOLLOW THE LECTIONARY

December 7, 2025
Second Sunday of Advent

Vision of Peace
 Isaiah 11:1-10
 Psalms 72:1-7c, 18-19
 Romans 15:4-13
 Matthew 3:1-12

December 14, 2025
Third Sunday of Advent

Heartbeat of Justice
 Isaiah 35:1-10
 Psalms 146:5-10 or **Luke 1:46b-55**
 James 5:7-10
 Matthew 11:2-11

December 21, 2025
Fourth Sunday of Advent

God with Us
 Isaiah 7:10-16
 Psalms 80:1-7, 17-19
 Romans 1:1-7
 Matthew 1:18-25

December 24, 2025
Christmas Eve

Isaiah 9:2-7
 Psalms 96
 Titus 2:11-14
 Luke 2:1-14 (15-20)

December 25, 2025
Christmas Day

Isaiah 62:6-12 or 52:7-10
 Psalms 97 or 98
 Titus 3:4-7 or Hebrews 1:1-4, (5-12)
 Luke 2:1-14 (15-20) or John 1:1-14

December 28, 2025
First Sunday after Christmas

Cosmic Praise
 Isaiah 63
Psalms 148
 Hebrews 2:10-18
 Matthew 22:13-23

December 31, 2025
Watch Night

Ecclesiastes 3:1-13 & Psalms 8
 Revelations 21:1-6a & Matthew 25:31-46

REMEMBER IN YOUR PRAYERS

Dustan Burgard, Cooper Davis, Alan Eppen, Annette Cook, Karen Filegar, Eric Gerber, Dale Mork, Jaxon Kaiser, Bob Olson, Joyce Ochsner, Marjorie Ormand, JoAnn Sanborn, Eddy Schaeffer, Jeannette Sorge, Shirley Schaeffer, Janet Von Eschen, Alan & Corene Chapman and Greg Wilson.

Pray for our members and friends who reside in care facilities or are shut-ins, wherever they reside:

Betty Betten, Colleen Carman, Dorothy Dockter, Betty Gutjahr, Emma Heiser, Alice Hopfinger, Ruth Overby, Priscilla Pfeifle, Joan Sanders, Kelli Wells, Nancy Wells and June Whites.

Please contact the church office (225-2557) to be added to or removed from the Prayer List.



**REMEMBER
 OUR SERVICE PEOPLE
 And All the Troops Stationed
 Around the World**

My mom and I would like to thank everyone for the calls, prayers and cards. A special thank you to Pastor's Blair and Sheila for your calls and texts. Thank you again for your thoughtfulness

Delila Biel & Robbie Eisenbeisz



Hi,

I am sending this (\$200) for Memorial gift-for Gary's Birthday Nov 20th. Use it for anything towards the audio equipment. I am so blessed to join the church services on line- I so wish I could attend in person- I miss everyone.

Please give my thanksgiving wishes to pastor-and same to you all.

Love Raeleen Schatz



A MESSAGE FROM OUR MODERATOR

As I complete my year as moderator, I want to wish the Congregation a Merry Christmas and the best of new year.

Be kind to and love one another. Pray that the members of the Congregation who are ill or alone do well during the coming months.

God Bless you all,

Brad Olson

Women's Fellowship Report

Women's Fellowship met Nov. 13th, with each person bringing food items for a needy family.

The treasurer's report showed a balance of \$23,399.08.

It was felt that the Bazaar was a success. Thank You to every one who participated in anyway.

The turntable on the kitchen microwave is not working, Women's Fellowship will purchase a new microwave.

It was requested; and approved, that Women's Fellowship bake turkeys and provide instant mashed potatoes, gravy mixes and bars for a thanksgiving dinner for the homeless/needy. This is sponsored by Midwest Street Medical, which is a group of churches led by Zion Lutheran Church.

Our next meeting will be February 12th, 2026 at 7p.m hope to see you there.

All are invited.



Yes! We still have nuts for sale!
Nuts Prices have increased.
Order through Donna Masters (605)228-9307
Or Call the Church and place your
order today! (605)225-2557

CELEBRATIONS

HAPPY BIRTHDAY!

- 12-01 Kevin Elsperger
Lucas Leddy
- 12-02 Betty Betten
- 12-05 Brian Christiansen
Chad Masters
Kent Roeker
- 12-6 Katherine Himanga
- 12-16 Mary Pietz
- 12-17 Laurie Cunningham
Jackson Holzer
- 12-18 Linda Fix
- 12-20 Bill Blide
Revecca Wells
- 12-21 Blade Olson
- 12-22 Sany Ullrich
- 12-23 Diana Nguyen
Carol Hilgemann
Vicki Mundt
Chloecherie Heagley
- 12-26 Ernest Schipke
- 12-28 Breanne Davis
Paul Niederbaumer
- 12-30 Corene Chapman
- 12-31 Harmony Mc Daniel



December Flower
Poinsettia



December Birthstone
Blue Topaz

HAPPY ANNIVERSARY!

- 12/06 Glenn & Dianne Spitzer 50 Years
- 12/20 Dale & Barbara Goehring 66 Years

Note: If you know of a birthday or an anniversary that was missed, we are deeply sorry. Please advise the Plymouth Congregational Secretary and she will make sure the dates are calendared for the future.

Pastoral Relations Committee Members 2026

Sheila Apland-Ottenbacher	(605)380-8688
Alan Chapman	(605)377-3291
Rhonda Masters	(605)380-0436
Donna Masters	(605)228-9307
Dani Roeker	(605)377-3080
Rev. Blair Kirkpatrick	(605)228-9307

2026 Visioning Team Members

Moderator	Mark Gutjahr-(605)228-5150
Moderator Elect	Gail Gutjahr-(605)216-6961
Facility Manager	Alan Chapman-(605)377-3291
Communications	Patricia Swanson-(605)730-0714
WF Representative	Donna Masters-(605)228-9307
At Large	Dani Roeker-(605)377-3080
At Large	Ron Beil-(605)228-1035
At Large	Chad Masters-(605)380-0498
Financial	Ed Bosanko-(605)228-2486
Spiritual	Sheila Apland-Ottenbacher-(605)380-8688
Auditor	Rod Fouberg-(605)229-1310

Plymouth Congregational Church of Christ
Visioning Team Minutes
October 21, 2025

Present: Donna Masters, Chad Masters, Laura Bunke, Dani Roeker, Alan Chapman, Brad Olson, Sheila Apland- Ottenbacher, Ed Tobin, Kristin Tobin, Ron Biel, Robbie Eisenbeisz and Pat Swanson.

Call to Order: Brad Olson

Opening Prayer: Ed Bosanko

Approval of September minutes: Kristin moved to approve. Alan seconded the motion. All voted in approval.

Old Business:

- Assigned committee positions for 2026
- Examined Jensen's bids for resurfacing the parking lot/ waiting on a bid from Lien's

New Business:

- Voted to continue Come to Suppers starting again in April.
- Brad announced that a Blood Drive is scheduled at our church on Nov, 14.
- Brad and Sheree will be presenting more puppet shows.

The annual Meeting may need to be rescheduled.

Committee Reports:

Finance Chairman Ed Bosanko gave an Endowment Report stating that the fund increased in value at the end of September 2025 to \$505,035.15. This year \$19,000 operating expenses for the church came out of the Endowment Fund. Monthly expenses are outweighing monthly contributions.

Alan Chapman, Facilities Manager, reported that the heat was turned on this week and the furnace is running well. The problems in the Women's bathroom have been fixed.

Women's Fellowship president Donna Masters reported on the preparations being made for the annual bazaar scheduled for Nov.1.

Sheila encouraged all to attend the Conference Association meeting in Brentford on the 26th. Presently there are 10 children attending G2G.

No pastoral report due to Blair's absence.

Devotions: Kristin

Next meeting: November 18, 2025 @ 6:30.

Respectfully submitted,

Pat Swanson



THIS MONTH AT PLYMOUTH CONGREGATIONAL
December 2025

Wed, Dec 3 3:30p-G2G

Sun, Dec 7 **Second Sunday of Advent**
10a-Worship-Holy Communion
11a-Fellowship

Tue, Dec 9 7p-DAV

Wed, Dec 10 3:30p-G2G

Thur, Dec 11 7p-Women's Fellowship Meeting

Sun, Dec 14 **Third Sunday of Advent**
10a-Worship
11a-Fellowship

Wed, Dec 17 3:30p-G2G

Sun, Dec 21 **Fourth Sunday of Advent**
10a-Worship; Children's Program
11a-Fellowship

Wed, Dec 24 5p- Christmas Eve Candle Light Service

Thur, Dec 25 Merry Christmas

Sun, Dec 28 **First Sunday After Christmas**
10a-Worship
11a-Fellowship

Wed, Dec 31 Happy New Year's Eve



† Please contact Missy 605-228-5818, or the church 605-225-2557, if you are interested in sharing something musical for the Christmas Eve service on December 24.

Plymouth Congregational Church

December 2025

SUNDAY	MON	TUE	WED	THUR	FRI	SAT
	1	2	3	4	5	6
7 Second Sunday of Advent 10a-Worship; Communion 11a-Fellowship <i>"Peace"</i>	8	9 7p-DAV	10 3:30p-G2G	11	12	13
14 Third Sunday of Advent 10a-Worship 11a-Fellowship <i>"Love"</i>	15	16 6:30p Visioning Team Meeting <u>NEWSLETTER</u> <u>ITEMS DUE</u>	17 3:30pG2G	18	19	20
21 Fourth Sunday of Advent 10a-Worship; children's program 11a-Fellowship <i>"Joy"</i> First day of Winter	22	23	24 Christmas Eve Candlelight service 5PM	25 Christmas Day Office Closed	26	27
28 First Sunday after Christmas 10a-Worship 11a-Fellowship	29	30	31 Happy New Years Eve Office Closed			



PLYMOUTH
ROCKS
Church and Family Life
Rev. Sheila Apland-Ottenbacher



G2G Secret Santa reveal on Dec 17 at our Christmas Party. There is a lot of excitement.!

New church website:
plymouthaberdeen.com

Don't forget to follow us on:



<https://www.facebook.com/plymouthaberdeen>



<https://www.youtube.com/@PlymouthUCCAberdeen>



<https://www.instagram.com/plymouthuccaberdeen/>

As I prepare this page for the month of December, I am thinking of our family plans for Thanksgiving. It's always been a holiday that brought a sense of busyness and stress. After two decades working in retail where Thanksgiving was just another day to work and try to get those holiday sales, it is hard to relax and enjoy the day for what it is: a day of Thanksgiving. There are so many things that need to happen between Thanksgiving and Christmas. It feels like I NEED to rush. That's what I've always done. Hurry, hurry, hurry. And yet, there are so many things I need to pay attention to so that I don't miss them. There is the excitement of the kids, the beauty of the season, the exchange of gifts, and the ultimate gift of God's love being revealed. How do I take it all in and hold on to it? More importantly, how does it change me when I do take it in? If I slow down and notice things around me, what new things will I be invited to be a part of and experience?

A deep challenge for me has come from recent struggles of people around me to fill their basic need for food security. Rising prices at the grocery store, questions about food assistance programs and continued expenses that never seem to go away create a stress and anxiety that can't be easily relieved. What can I do to make a difference? At the moment, I have enough. So, what can I do for those who don't have enough? That has been my struggle as I have tried to bring opportunities for Plymouth to reach out into the community and help. Every small gesture brings some relief for someone. Tears of thanks and sighs of relief are a GREAT REWARD.

I invite you as we enter the season of Advent and Christmas to join with me and others at Plymouth to slow down and notice those around you. And when the opportunity arises, see how we can take a step toward fulfilling God's call to reach out to the least of these in God's generous love that has been shared with us.

May God bless you in the coming season and provide you with a renewed sense of commitment as we enter 2026.

Rev. Sheila Apland-Ottenbacher
Minister of Church and Family Life

A LOOK AHEAD

*** JANUARY 2026 ***

PLYMOUTH CONGREGATIONAL UCC

SUNDAY	MON	TUE	WED	THUR	FRI	SAT
				1 Happy New Year's Day	2	3
4 Second Sunday after Christmas 10a-Worship; Communion 11a-Fellowship	5	6 Epiphany	7 3:30p-G2G	8 7p-WF meeting	9	10
11 Baptism of Christ 10a-Worship; Pledge Sunday 11a-2025 Annual Final Fiscal meeting Meal to follow 4:30 Confirmation	12	13 7p-DAV	14 3:30pG2G	15	16	17
18 Second Sunday after the Epiphany 10a-Worship 11a-Fellowship	19	20 6:30p Visioning Team Meeting <u>NEWSLETTER ITEMS DUE</u>	21 3:30pG2G	22	23	24
25 Third Sunday after the Epiphany 10a-Worship 11a-Fellowship 4:30 Confirmation	26	27	28 3:30pG2G	29	30	31



2025 Annual Final Fiscal Meeting
will be held Sunday January 11th (Pledge Sunday)
following service, with meal to
follow meeting.
Everyone encouraged to join.



Last Sunday for sign up December 7th.
Sign-up sheet for poinsettias in Narthex.

Colors available are pink, red & white.

6" will be \$11 (one stem)

8" will be \$15 (two stems)

They are also offering a 10" for \$25

*Remember In Honor of or In Memory of...

Call Laura for any questions 605-225-2557 or 605-290-2746
(being this is out late.)



Christmas Eve Candlelight service will be held at 5pm Christmas Eve.

Join the music and entertainment and LOVE for Our Saviors birth.





We sadly say "GOODBYE "
&
God Bless you and your family.

Lois A. Wales Obituary

The funeral service for Lois Arlene Wales, 97, of Aberdeen, SD, will be 11:00am, Tuesday, December 2, 2025, at Plymouth Congregational UCC, with Pastor Blair Kirkpatrick officiating. Burial will be at a later date at Hillcrest Cemetery, Estelline, SD. Lois died Thursday, November 27, at Avera Mother Joseph Manor in Aberdeen, SD.

Visitation were held at 9:00am until the time of the service on Tuesday at the church. Arrangements by Spitzer-Miller Funeral Home, 1111 South Main Street.

Lois Arlene Johnson was born April 17, 1928, to Ole and Irene (Irvin) Johnson in Kingsbury County, SD. She grew up and attended school in the area, graduating from Estelline High School.

On June 6, 1946, Lois was united in marriage to Robert Clayton Wales in Estelline. Together they owned Estelline Dry Cleaning Plant. Lois enjoyed running her popcorn stand in Estelline. They moved to Watertown where Lois worked on an assembly line. Later they moved to Aberdeen where Lois worked at the Crockery.

Lois and Robert enjoyed traveling, especially to Hawaii. Lois was a talented embroiderer, liked reading, and playing Bunco. She loved singing and was active in the church choir. Lois liked attending NSU basketball games and listening to their band. She and Robert always had a dog that they loved.

Grateful for having shared Lois's life are her daughters: Betty (Pat) Halseth and Susan (Dick) Weigel; her daughter-in-law, Jan Wales; eight granddaughters, twenty-four great-grandchildren, and four great-great-grandchildren.



**PLYMOUTH CONGREGATIONAL
UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST**

431 West Melgaard Road
Aberdeen, SD 57401

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REACHING OUT,
RENEWING LIVES



Church Staff:

Pastor	Rev. Blair Kirkpatrick
Minister of Church and Family Life	
	Rev. Sheila Apland-Ottenbacher
Secretary	Laura Bunke
Director of Music Ministry	Missy Nguyen
Child Care Attendant	Eloise Appletoft
Custodian	Lois Korf
Facilities Manager	Alan Chapman

OFFICE HOURS: 9:00—2:00, Mon, Wed-Fri.

Phone: (605) 225-2557

Email: sec.plymouth@midconetwork.com

www.plymouthaberdeen.com

WORSHIP SERVICES

SUNDAY 10:00 AM

www.plymouthaberdeen.com

